

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-8, and 10-86 are pending. Claims 1-8, and 10-22 are allowed. Claims 26-32, and 34-39 are objected to. Claims 40-86 are canceled.

Applicants note that claims 1-8, and 10-22 are allowed, and claims 26-32 and 34-39 are objected to.

The only issue precluding allowance of all pending claims in this application is the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102, discussed in greater detail, below.

Examiner Interview Summary

On July 10, 2003, the Examiner Yu graciously conducted an interview with Applicants' representative at Examiner Yu's office. The Application and outstanding issues were discussed in detail, and the interview is accurately described in the Examiner Interview Summary form completed by Examiner Yu at the conclusion of the interview.

In view of the discussions during the interview and this Amendment, it is believed that all outstanding issues have been resolved.

The time and attention to this Application by the Examiner are greatly appreciated.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 23-25, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as allegedly being anticipated by Futaki et al., LaPointe et al., Hamilton et al., Belvisi et al., or Lundy et al. (cited in the Office Action as WO 98/50033). This rejection is respectfully traversed. As stated in the record, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references are deficient at least in view of the fact that they fail to disclose or suggest the step of detecting a COX-2 specific metabolite, or detecting a metabolite of a COX-2 selective substrate. The references disclose methods of detecting COX-2 enzymatic activity by detecting 6-keto-PGF_{1α}. 6-keto-PGF_{1α} is a metabolite of PGH₂, which is the product of COX oxygenation of arachidonic acid (AA). AA is oxidized at equivalent rates by COX-1 and COX-2. Therefore, there can be no inherent preference for the production of 6-keto-PGF_{1α} by COX-2.

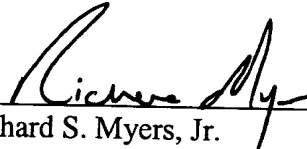
However, in an effort to obtain expeditious allowance of this application, the above amendment renders this rejection moot. Claim 28, free from this rejection, has been incorporated into claim 23. Accordingly, claim 23 is now be allowable.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicants hereby petition for a one-month extension of time for filing a response to the outstanding Office Action. A Form PTO-2038 in the amount of \$55.00 for the extension of time fee is attached.

If the Examiner has any questions concerning this election or the Application in general,
she is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard S. Myers, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line.

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